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INTERGOVERNMENTAL COORDINATION

ROWAN COUNTY, NORTH CAROLINA
SALISBURY, SPENCER, EAST SPENCER, GRANITE QUARRY
LANDIS, CHINA GROVE, ROCKWELL, FAITH, CLEVELAND

PREPARED FOR: ROWAN COUNTY, NORTH CAROLINA
SALISBURY-SPENCER-EAST SPENCER-GRANITE QUARRY
LANDIS-CHINA GROVE-ROCKWELL-FAITH-CLEVELAND

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INTRODUCTION

For a number of years the federal government has supported the Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations. This commission devotes its full time and efforts in studying ways to improve governmental procedures on the federal, state and local levels. Findings are reported and recommendations are made for new techniques and concepts which the commission feels would enhance government's responsiveness to the public and to other governmental organizations. In a sense this report is similar in nature. Its purpose is to report on existing achievements in intergovernmental coordination on the local level, acknowledge areas that are presently under consideration for coordination and to suggest additional proposals which appear to hold promise for intergovernmental coordination.

The Rowan Municipal and County Planning Board is uniquely suited for this role because its membership is composed of the Chairman and Vice Chairman of the county planning board and the planning boards of those six municipalities in the county which have active planning programs. The municipalities without planning boards also have representation. The Board is one of the earlier and most complete forms of intergovernmental coordination in the county. The planning staff is a central organization which serves each of the active planning programs and acknowledges the needs and inter-relationship that the municipalities without planning programs have with all other local governments. Because of its work the Board and staff are aware of problems that different local governments have in common as well as potentials for resolving them through cooperative efforts. Much of the work of the Board involves seeking ways and means of achieving better efficiency or service through coordination and suggesting proposals to work toward the same.

This report documents the efforts of the local units of government to achieve, and continue to seek better, more efficient methods and procedures to bring better services to the people through intergovernmental coordination.

EXISTING INTERGOVERNMENTAL COORDINATION

EXISTING INTERGOVERNMENTAL COORDINATION

There are many examples of intergovernmental coordination in Rowan County. Some of those listed below have existed for some time while others are relatively recent, the result of concerted discussions, planning and mutual action.

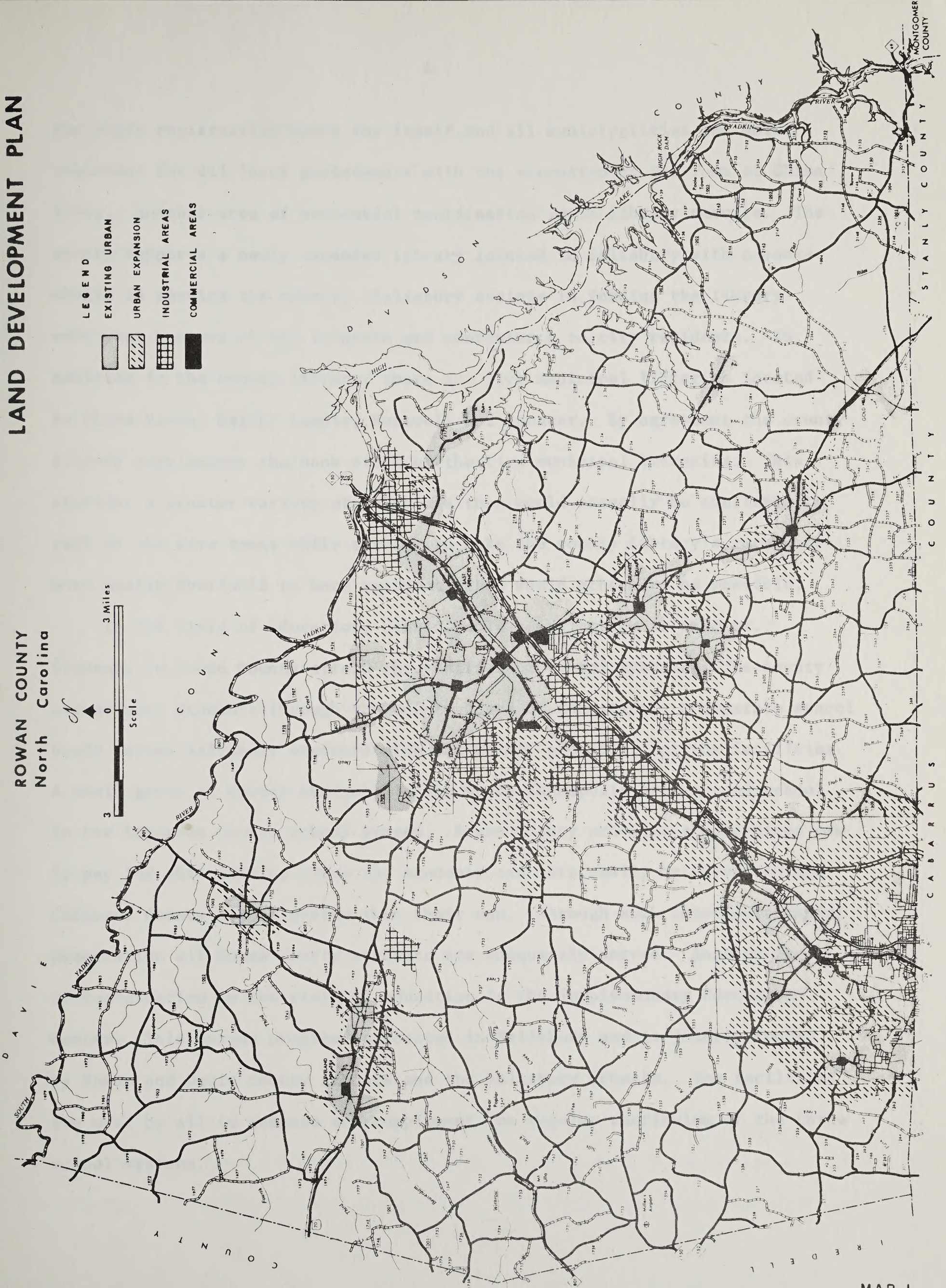
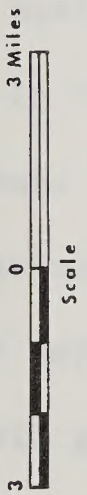
Perhaps the most significant area of intergovernmental coordination with respect to the future decision making process is in land use and thoroughfare planning. Plans for the future use of land in Rowan County and its municipalities have been prepared and coordinated where governmental boundaries meet. Thoroughfare plans have also been coordinated, not only within Rowan County and its municipalities, but also with neighboring counties. More recently that part of the thoroughfare plan concerned with Salisbury, Spencer, East Spencer, Granite Quarry and the surrounding areas has been undergoing review and update. The cost of the study is jointly funded by each of the municipalities. Within the past year numerous meetings have been held jointly by representatives of the several municipalities and within each municipality separately. The ultimate aim is to achieve a thoroughfare plan that meets the needs of each municipality as well as the entire urban area they collectively represent. The land development plan and the data which was used to prepare it are used frequently in discussions, meetings and work which involves or has resulted in intergovernmental coordination. Examples include proposals for county water and sewer facilities, watershed development, recreation, school planning and, of course, the thoroughfare plan.

An excellent example of intergovernmental coordination in Rowan County is in the area of voter registration and elections. The county maintains

ROWAN COUNTY
North Carolina

LAND DEVELOPMENT PLAN

- LEGEND
- EXISTING URBAN
 - URBAN EXPANSION
 - INDUSTRIAL AREAS
 - COMMERCIAL AREAS



the voter registration books for itself and all municipalities and holds elections for all local governments with the exception of the Town of China Grove. Another area of successful coordination is in library service. The county supports a newly expanded library located in Salisbury with a book-mobile to service the county. Salisbury assists in funding the library each year because of its location and convenience to city residents. In addition to the county library, there are five municipal libraries located in China Grove, Faith, Landis, Rockwell and Spencer. By agreement the county library supplements the book stock of the five municipal libraries. This provides a greater variety of materials than would normally be available to each of the five towns while serving to make the county library's resources more easily available to more residents than would otherwise be possible.

In the field of education, considerable coordination is evident. Students in Rowan County attend three different school systems. The county serves most students through the county Board of Education. A separate school board serves Salisbury students with the county providing for the facilities. A small group of county students in the North Kannapolis area attend school in the Cabarrus County school system. Rowan County provides a percentage sum to pay for this service since the students can more easily be served in the Cabarrus County school system than their own. Through such intergovernmental cooperation all Rowan County students are adequately served. Another form of coordination in the field of education is the Supplementary Education Center. This unique program is located in Salisbury and is jointly funded by Rowan and Davie county schools and the Salisbury schools. The facilities are used by all to enhance and supplement the regular curriculum of the three school systems.

Police communication is another area of intergovernment coordination. Until recently each law protection agency in the county and its municipalities had separate communications systems. A new radio system now makes it possible for the two county sheriff's offices and the police departments of Salisbury, Spencer, East Spencer, China Grove and Landis to communicate directly with each other. In addition a separate system allows the county to communicate with surrounding counties. Fire protection throughout the county has a similar system for reporting fires. The Salisbury headquarters fire station serves as a central alarm station for all incoming fires for all the municipal and volunteer county fire departments. The Town of Landis is the one exception and chooses to operate its own alarm system. Once a fire call is received at the central station the proper fire department is given notification. Further cooperation exists in mutual aid agreements whereby each fire department agrees to assist others in time of need.

Animal control has offered another opportunity for mutual cooperation. The City of Salisbury recently initiated a leash law and employed an animal control officer and vehicle. The city has no animal shelter so it uses the one operated by the county. Located near the county sanitary landfill is another recent example of intergovernmental coordination. A short time ago several municipalities in the county operated their own sanitary landfills. This led to considerable duplication of equipment and manpower. By agreements between the county and the several municipalities all of the municipalities closed their landfill operations and the county sanitary landfill is available to all. This has resulted in greater efficiency and better quality of solid waste disposal.

Water and sewer facilities are also areas which have produced intergovernmental coordination and cooperation. The City of Salisbury operates

the principal water and sewer facilities in Rowan County. In addition to serving its own citizens, Salisbury provides all of the water for the towns of Granite Quarry and East Spencer plus most of the water needs for the town of Spencer. Each town provides its own distribution system. The Town of East Spencer also uses the Town Creek sewage treatment plant which is owned and operated by Salisbury. This form of cooperation has saved unnecessary duplication and expense among the municipalities. Salisbury has also cooperated with Rowan County in the extension of water and sewer lines to industries and subdivisions which lie beyond the city's limits. A more recent example of intergovernmental cooperation in the area of water and sewer facilities was undertaken by the county. It was the county's intention to make public water and sewer services available through a unified distribution and collection system to any and all municipalities which desired it in the county as well as to county residents wherever population densities would justify the service. This effort had the full endorsement of most of the municipalities. The initial systems would take advantage of the surplus water and sewage treatment capacities of Salisbury. As the system grew and exhausted these surpluses, county water and sewer treatment plants would be constructed. The program depended on the issuance of bonds to partially finance the construction of the distribution and collection networks and ultimately to build treatment plants. The bond issue had to receive the approval of the voters. While the voters chose not to approve the issuance of the bonds in April, 1974, this does not lessen the willingness with which the several governments were prepared and did cooperate with one another. As with examples already stated and those others to follow, this effort exemplifies the spirit which prevails among the several local governments in Rowan County with respect to cooperation for mutual benefit.

A form of intergovernmental coordination with major significance is the shared town manager program that is now underway in the towns of Granite Quarry, Faith and China Grove. This program evolved from intergovernmental discussions and the financial assistance of the Centralina Council of Government. The three towns were without experienced managerial help. Because of their size none of the towns could justify a full-time manager. By joining together they were able to employ a trained manager who shares his time with each of the three towns. The Centralina Council of Governments helped to make the demonstration program possible by partially paying the cost. This assistance will continue for three years with the amount of assistance decreasing each year. After the third year the cost of the program will be borne entirely by the three towns. This type of intergovernmental coordination has made possible a service which neither of the towns could justify alone and proves that much more can be achieved locally to improve services and facilities for the public.

SUGGESTED AREAS OF COORDINATION

SUGGESTED AREAS OF COORDINATION

Past experience has shown the value of intergovernmental coordination. Local governments have found areas where mutual benefits could be derived by pooling resources and efforts. Other areas for coordination and cooperation will continue to arise and each should be analyzed and considered. Below are several suggested areas that may prove of value in the future.

Three towns in the county are successfully sharing a manager. The program became a reality because a need existed. Another need is local public works services. Nine municipalities in Rowan County have public water distribution systems and seven municipalities have sewage collection and treatment facilities. Furthermore, all nine have public streets, sidewalks, parks, storm drainage, and municipal buildings to maintain and five provide personnel and equipment for solid waste collection. The remaining four towns contract with private collectors for this service. The county maintains a sanitary landfill and a system of solid waste containers located throughout the county. In the future it may be expected that the county will find it necessary to consider storm drainage and flood plains more carefully than has been required so far. In spite of the fact that the voters desire not to issue bonds for a county water and sewer system, the county will probably find itself reviewing water and sewer line proposals.

Interestingly enough, with all of this activity of a public works nature, only Salisbury has full-time engineering capabilities. All others depend on consulting services to determine their needs in the area of water and sewer services and local personnel to perform all other public works activities. In each individual case the work load is insufficient to justify full-time engineers. Yet there are times when such a service would be highly

desirable. Such a person could review engineering contracts, supervise the proper construction of improvements and generally oversee operations to assure they are functioning properly. By mutual cooperation all or several of the local governments which are without engineering capabilities could share the services of an engineer who would be based locally and would be available on an as needed basis. Each participating government would share in the cost. This would guarantee competent services and advice at a cost which all could justify. To determine the interest and feasibility of such a program, informal discussions have been and will continue to be carried on with various local governments and with the Centralina Council of Governments.

Solid waste collection and disposal is another area with possibilities for further intergovernmental coordination. The county now operates a sanitary landfill which is used by all municipalities. A fee is charged to the municipalities, based on the truckloads of solid waste they dispose at the landfill. The county also operates a system of four cubic yard disposal containers located throughout the unincorporated areas of the county. These are available to individuals who cannot or do not wish to contract with private collectors. The containers are emptied once a day and help stop the wanton dumping of garbage and trash along roadsides and into ravines. A number of private collectors operate in the county collecting residential, commercial and industrial wastes for a fee. The four smaller towns also contract for their services rather than have the expense of full-time personnel plus the collection equipment. However, there are large areas of the county which are not served by the private collectors because there are too few customers to justify the expense. The county containers help to ease the disposal problems for those low density areas. No franchises are required for the private collectors and no exclusive territories are established.

ROWAN COUNTY
North Carolina

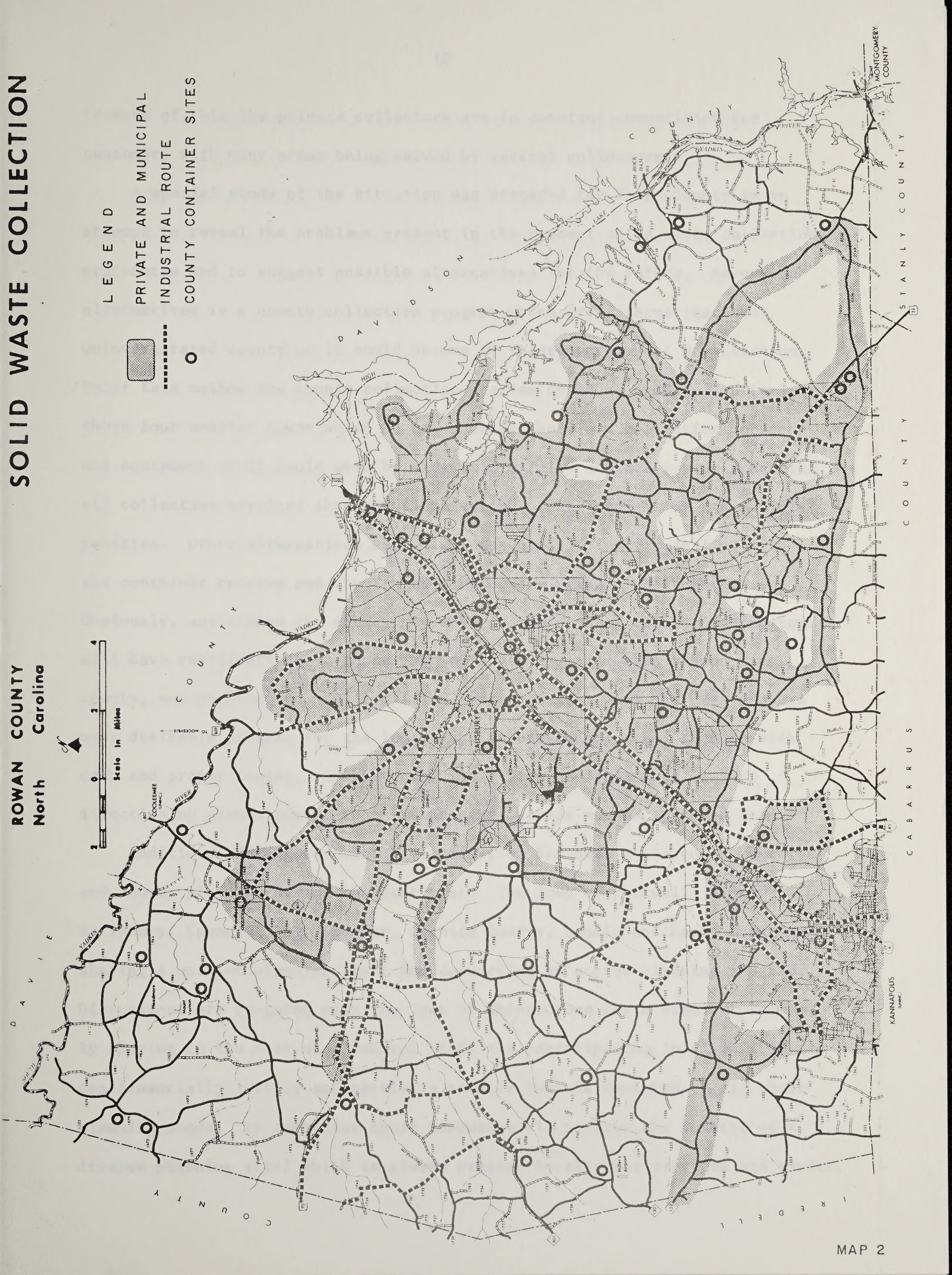
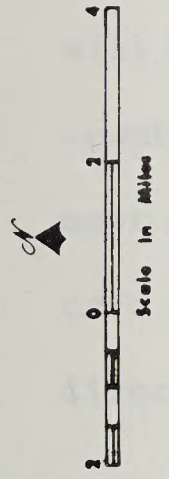
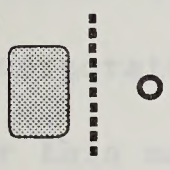
SOLID WASTE COLLECTION

LEGEND

PRIVATE AND MUNICIPAL

INDUSTRIAL ROUTE

COUNTY CONTAINER SITES



Because of this the private collectors are in constant competition for customers with many areas being served by several collectors.

A special study of the situation was prepared for Rowan County in an attempt to reveal the problems present in the present solid waste collection procedures and to suggest possible alternatives for the future. Among the alternatives is a county collection program which could serve just the unincorporated county or it could become an intergovernmental organization. Under this method the county collection program could be expanded to include those four smaller towns which do not provide their own collection personnel and equipment or it could even be made into a fully unified system providing all collection services throughout the entire county and all of its municipalities. Other alternatives were also presented, primarily dealing with the container program and the franchising of the private collectors. Obviously, any change the county may make in the present collection programs will have ramifications in those that exist today. For this reason the county, and perhaps the municipalities, must consider what they feel is the most desirable program for the long range future and plan any changes with care and proper timing. However, the first step has been made in that direction by acknowledging that the present methods may be improved upon.

Additional intergovernmental coordination has been achieved in municipal and county planning during the past year. The Town of Rockwell joined Salisbury, Spencer, East Spencer, Granite Quarry, Landis and Rowan County in sharing a unified planning staff and conducting an active planning program. Discussions are on-going with the Town of China Grove for a similar program. By sharing in the cost of a central staff the participating local governments can financially justify and receive a service that is designed to fit their planning needs. By combining their resources all receive the benefit of a diverse planning staff which is always present locally for services and advice.

An area under study now is a branch library program for the county. The Rowan County Library now supplements the book stock of five municipal libraries and a bookmobile is available for those areas which are remote from library services. The five municipal libraries are small, generally keep insufficient operating hours and are usually run by volunteers without adequate time to devote to the program. Furthermore there are still three municipalities plus the unincorporated urban area of North Kannapolis which are without convenient library services and there may be other areas of the county where a branch, or at least a station, would be a desirable service. The municipal libraries are presently under study to see what their needs are. From this could evolve recommendations for an improved county library system that would involve closer intergovernmental coordination in the provision of library services.

During the past year considerable effort has been concentrated in the field of health care services in Rowan County. A number of recommendations have come out of this work to improve services to the public. The two most notable recommendations with respect to intergovernmental coordination is a proposal to have two or more towns to combine resources to attract one or more doctors and a proposal for a public safety central alarm system for any emergency.

It has been proposed that the towns of Granite Quarry, Faith and Rockwell come together in an effort to attract medical services for their area. The proposal is still flexible as to approach, but in essence the three towns would share in guaranteeing a minimum annual salary for a doctor who would agree to locate in the area and serve the general medical needs of the three towns. The concept has been discussed with representatives of two of the towns thus far, and the response was positive. This same proposal could

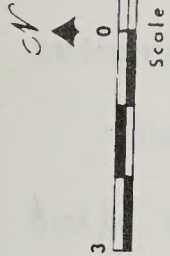
easily be used by other small towns which find themselves lacking in medical care and without the population to attract a doctor individually.

The second proposal would involve all local governments in Rowan County. The intent is to create a central alarm center with one three-digit telephone number that would receive any emergency call regardless of type or location. The central station would then relay the message to the appropriate organization or organizations. The system would include, as a minimum, all law enforcement departments, all fire departments, both municipal and rural, and ambulance service. The program may not be difficult to initiate since there already exists a central fire alarm system for most of the county and the county and municipal law enforcement agencies have intercommunications. A related proposal recommends that multiple training of emergency personnel be accomplished. Thus, a fireman could also be trained as an emergency medical services technician. He would then be prepared to offer early medical aid at the scene of fires or other catastrophes. It may also be possible to locate emergency vans at specified locations throughout the county and its municipalities to provide a quicker emergency ambulance service response than is now possible.

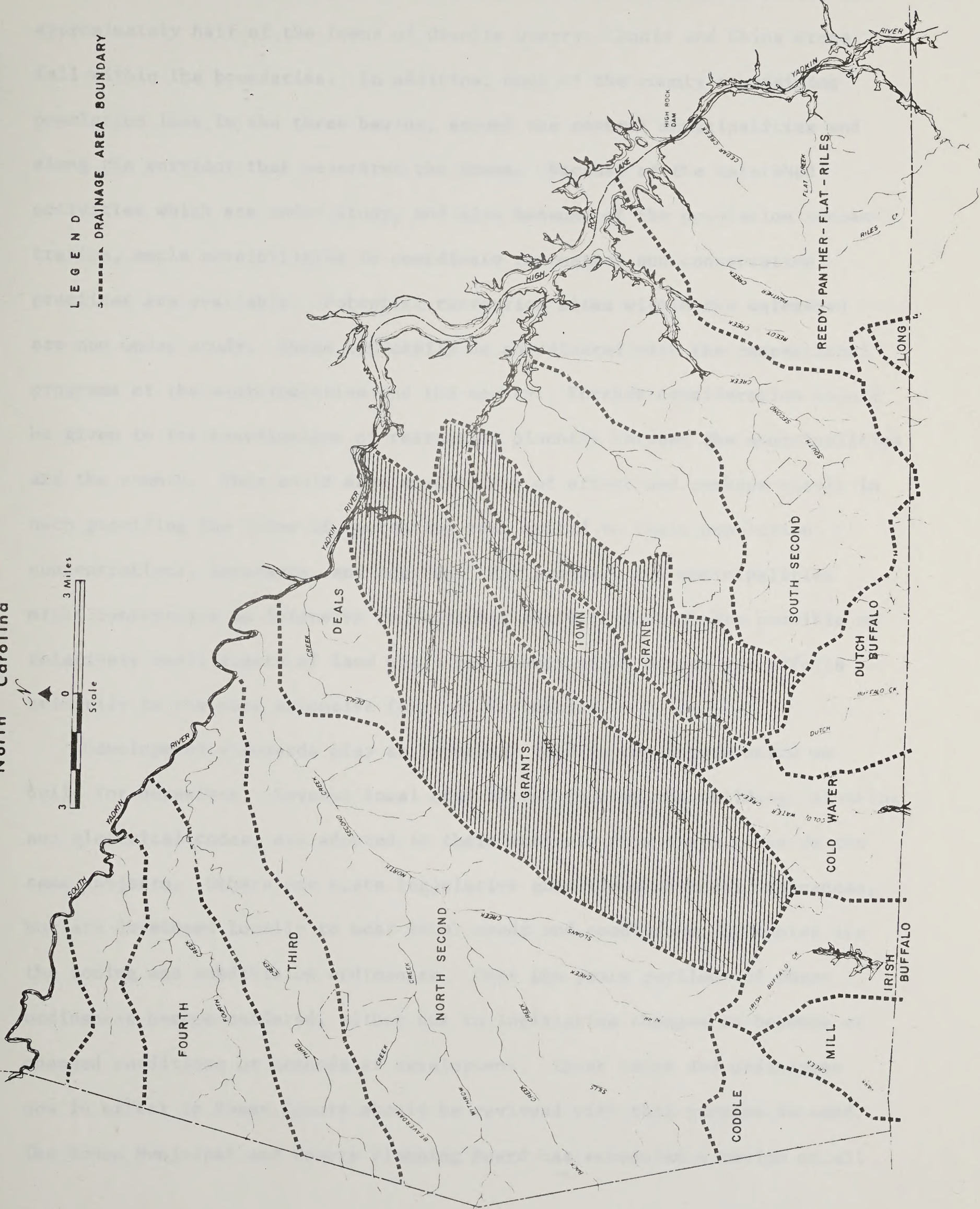
Another area capable of intergovernmental coordination is public recreation. Some discussion has already been held between Rowan County and the City of Salisbury with respect to mutual planning and coordination of recreation programs, facilities and personnel. Furthermore, there is considerable potential to develop recreational facilities in conjunction with the Rowan County Watershed Commission's Tri-Creek Watershed project. This project proposes to improve land use and conservation practices within the drainage basins of three adjacent streams. The three streams are Grants, Town, and Crane creeks. The City of Salisbury and the towns of Spencer

ROWAN COUNTY
North Carolina

DRAINAGE BASINS



LEGEND
----- DRAINAGE AREA BOUNDARY



and East Spencer lie entirely within the boundaries of the three basins and approximately half of the towns of Granite Quarry, Landis and China Grove fall within the boundaries. In addition, much of the county's remaining population lies in the three basins, around the several municipalities and along the corridor that separates the towns. Because of the watershed activities which are under study, and also because of the population concentration, ample possibilities to coordinate recreation and conservation practices are available. Potential recreation sites within the watershed are now under study. These can easily be coordinated with the recreational programs of the municipalities and the county. Further consideration should be given to the coordination of recreation planning between the municipalities and the county. This could save duplication of effort and perhaps result in each providing the forms of recreation best suited to their population concentrations, interests, and desires. For example, the municipalities might concentrate on intensive recreational activities which are possible on relatively small tracts of land while the county might devote its efforts primarily to the more extensive forms of recreation.

Development standards play an important role in the future world we build for ourselves. Several local ordinances, such as the building, plumbing and electrical codes, are adopted in their entirety from state codes on the same subjects. Others use state legislative guidelines or model ordinances, but are developed locally to meet local needs and conditions. Examples are the zoning and subdivision ordinances. Over the years portions of these ordinances become outdated, either due to legislative changes or because of changed conditions or methods of development. Those codes and ordinances now in effect in Rowan County should be reviewed with this purpose in mind. The Rowan Municipal and County Planning Board has scheduled a review of all

zoning ordinances which are now in effect in those local governments now served by it. This review will reveal changes, modifications and additions which should be made and recommendations will be forthcoming on the same. The advantage to this review process is that the central reviewing agency can suggest changes which will make the zoning ordinances uniform in so far as that is feasible and justified. This should simplify the use of the zoning ordinances by individuals as they work between the several municipalities. Other codes and ordinances should also be reviewed in this manner and proposed ordinances should be developed for consideration by those local governments which are now without one or more of them. Coordination by local units of government in the preparation of development standards, and perhaps the coordination or sharing of enforcement personnel should be explored further to assure uniformity in standards and enforcement procedures and to avoid confusion and duplication of work.

Where existing or new development standard ordinances effect conditions which are present in more than one unit of local government, methods should be considered for unified control. Examples of this are the state enacted sedimentation control law and the control of land use development within flood plains. Both examples span across jurisdictional boundaries and should be handled uniformly. Discussions have already been held at the administrative level on these two subjects. These discussions should continue and be broadened to include the local legislative bodies themselves, in a search for the best method of preparing and enforcing standards related to sedimentation and flood plain control, as well as any other development standards of intergovernmental concern.

Considerable interest and activity has been shown recently in Rowan County and its municipalities in historic recognition, preservation and

restoration. The Rowan Municipal and County Planning Board published an award winning¹ report entitled Historic Preservation, Salisbury-Rowan County, N. C. in 1973. Since that time the county has created a Historic Properties Commission which has, and continues to search out properties of historic significance and have them registered with the state and the National Historic Register. A historical foundation has been formed in Salisbury which has delineated and studied an area of about nine blocks which is historically significant with respect to the age, style and prior ownership of many of its homes. One such home has been purchased by the Foundation complete with period furniture. It is opened to the public on special occasions and is now assured of preservation. Another effort of the Foundation has resulted in one street in the historic area being lighted by gas lights of a type found in old Salisbury. The Salisbury Historic Foundation has cooperated with others to save an old Presbyterian Church Dependency house which was scheduled for destruction. They are also actively engaged in negotiations to save the old Presbyterian church bell tower which has been a significant part of the Salisbury visual image for many years. The Foundation is seeking to develop a historic district proposal to help protect and preserve the historic area formerly mentioned.

Historic interest has also become active in several other municipalities in the county as a result of planning programs concerned with historic preservation and community appearance. At present each municipality and the county are basically pursuing individual courses in their historic endeavors. This is not unusual since each has its own history to preserve.

¹1974 first place award in the category of "Reports," Carolina Chapter of the Society for Technical Communications.

Still, the history of one may be said to be part of the whole that contributes to the deep rooted past of the area. A coordinated effort would bring together the total significance of the areas' history and produce a greater sense of the full heritage which may be preserved for future generations. It would also have the advantage of combining the special talents of those individuals who are particularly knowledgeable and active in preservation work, but who are now largely working in separate groups. A combined historical properties commission has been proposed. Additional discussions should be carried on to find a way to bring together those efforts which would be most beneficial if carried on jointly and seek intergovernmental recognition of the organization.

The above suggested areas of intergovernmental coordination have all been considered and at least initial discussions have already been held on their worth and need. Other opportunities for improved intergovernmental cooperation may be expected to present themselves in the future and should be given appropriate consideration.

Chief Functions and Services Authorized for City and
County Governments in North Carolina

A. Services and Functions Authorized for Counties Only

- | | | |
|---------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1. Agricultural Extension | 4. Juvenile Detention Homes | 6. Register of Deeds |
| 2. Community Colleges | 5. Public Schools | 7. Social Services |
| 3. County Home | | 8. Soil & Water Conservation |

B. Services and Functions Authorized for Both Cities and Counties

- | | | |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 1. Airports | 12. Hospitals | 24. Parks |
| 2. Ambulance Services | 13. Human Relations | 25. Planning |
| 3. Animal Shelters | 14. Industrial Promotion | 26. Public Health |
| 4. Art Galleries | 15. Inspections | 27. Public Housing |
| 5. Beach Erosion Control | 16. Jails | 28. Recreation |
| 6. Bus Lines & Mass Transit | 17. Law Enforcement | 29. Refuse Coll. & Disposal |
| 7. Civil Defense | 18. Libraries | 30. Rescue Squads |
| 8. Community Appearance | 19. Manpower | 31. Sewerage |
| 9. Community Action | 20. Mental Health | 32. Urban Renewal |
| 10. Fire Protection | 21. National Guard | 33. Veterans Services |
| 11. Historic Preservation | 22. Off-street Parking | 34. Water |
| | 23. Open Space | 35. Watershed Improvement
Programs |

C. Services and Functions Authorized for Cities Only

- | | | |
|---------------------|---------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. Auditorium | 4. Electric Systems | 8. Street Lighting |
| 2. Cable Television | 5. Gas Systems | 9. Streets |
| 3. Cemeteries | 6. Sidewalks | 10. Traffic Engineering |
| | 7. Storm Drainage | |

Both units have authority to undertake the necessary supporting functions and activities: finance, tax collection, personnel, purchasing, etc., and to construct buildings and other facilities necessary to provide the listed services and functions. The authority cited in the above list is qualified in some cases. In a few cases, units of only a certain size possess the authority. In others, state policy may restrict or limit the authority. And in some cases one unit's action may limit the other's. The list does not include regulatory authority.

